



The Gleaner
2008 - 2009



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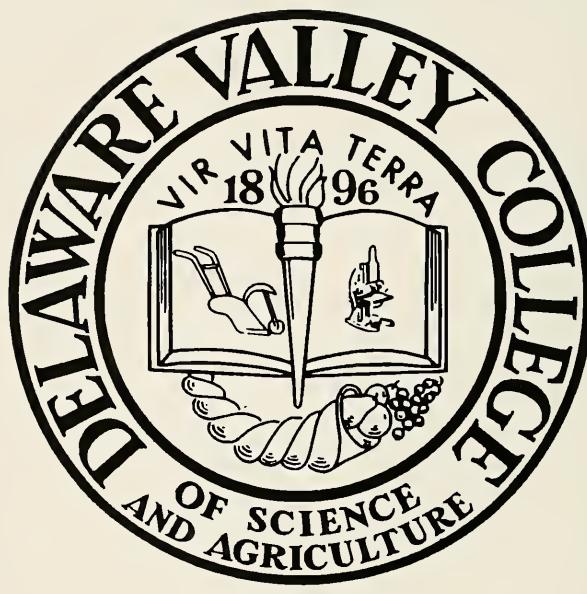
Established 1901

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Despite the weather, it's a wonderful day in a wonderful week which began on Monday night at 11:48PM with the birth of my granddaughter, Kennedy.

Thank you all for making a special effort to be here. Speaking of weather, Rabbi Sussman is not responsible... he's in sales, not marketing!

What I also want to say is "thank you" – to the presenters who have already spoken here today; to the committee that planned and put together this wonderful event, particularly to the co-chairs, George West, Professor of Business Administration and a former President of this institution, and Betsy Garrison, our Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; and to Betsy's administrative assistant, Lex Islinger, who, as with so many administrative assistants (Angela Reckner comes to mind here), ...They are the unsung heroes behind this occasion and much else in their boss's daily administrative lives.

Thanks also to my new colleagues: the trustees, faculty, alumni, students and staff of Delaware Valley College who have made DelVal what it is today, and to my old friends from Columbia University's Teachers College, and those from other parts of my life who have traveled here for this occasion. To my fiancée, Carla, and her son Brennan; to my family and extended family – particularly my mother, Mary Brosnan; my daughter, Michelle and her children, Elizabeth and Alex; and my son, Steven, who is here, and his wife, Jessica, who is not because SHE IS THE ONE WHO HAD THE BABY. Special thanks, as well, to Rabbi Lance Sussman, my niece, Anna Williams, and my cousin, Fr. Tom Brosnan, for making a special effort to be part of this ceremony. It means so much to me to see you all here.

Since I started at the college last August, I have met with hundreds of people. I often ask them their opinions and perceptions of DelVal. I hear time and time again that DelVal is a hidden gem. However, while most perceive us positively, they know very little about who we are. Most think of us as "that little old farm school in Doylestown." We are much misunderstood. We are so much more than our image, and I believe it is important to get our story out.

So today I want to talk about where we came from, who we are, and where we need to go. Because I was a history major in college, I have a very strong belief in the past as prologue. For that reason, I'd like to start by sharing some of the very rich history of this institution, because while much has changed in 112 years, much about the college's beginnings also speaks to the present moment, and to the future.

The idea for Delaware Valley College was born in 1894 when Joseph Krauskopf, the young rabbi of Philadelphia's Congregation Keneseth Israel, traveled to Russia and sought out the great writer, Count Leo Tolstoy. Krauskopf was a man ahead of his time – one of the leading exponents of Reform Judaism in the United States, a self-made intellectual, philosopher and social activist who was already speaking out on issues ranging from slums and child labor to conservation and universal education. Krauskopf was concerned about the plight of struggling Russian Jewish families, and he had a plan to help resettle them in rural, undeveloped areas of Russia. But Count Tolstoy was afraid that the Russian government would oppose the plan. Instead,

he counseled Krauskopf to create farm schools in the U.S. and encourage Jews from urban areas – both in America and elsewhere – to come and learn agricultural skills.

Krauskopf returned home and raised enough money to buy a 100-acre farm near Doylestown, Pennsylvania. On April 10th, 1896, the National Farm School opened its doors, boasting a faculty of two and a student body of six. (I'd like to point out that that's a three-to-one student-faculty ratio – even then we were setting the bar high!). As the school's name made plain, farming, from the very first, was the order of the day. And yet the seeds of a broader focus – if I can be permitted an agricultural metaphor – were planted from the very first.

Reporting on the new institution in 1897, the New York Times spoke of “the national character of the undertaking.” The newspaper also noted that the school would be “non-sectarian,” and that “they will have both the theory and practice of scientific farming.” The Times further stated, “They will divide the day between actual farm labor and intellectual discussion.” Thus there was to be no artificial distinction between academic and practical experience.

It was an approach rooted in the broader view – espoused by perhaps America’s greatest educational philosopher, John Dewey, that meaning and understanding are created in the doing, and that learning is not and should never be a tame process in which students passively absorb distilled wisdom.

Beyond the specific study of agriculture, Krauskopf also imbued the college with the values of disciplined scholarship, good citizenship, tolerance, environmental appreciation, and lifelong learning. Those values took root in the hearts and mind of those early students.

In 1946, James Work, a graduate of the class of 1913, returned as president and began to strengthen and expand our academic program. Over the ensuing years, we would add programs in Biology, Chemistry, Business Administration, Liberal Arts, Mathematics, Criminal Justice Administration and Secondary Education. Today we offer some 42 majors at the graduate and undergraduate level. Along the way, we took the name “Delaware Valley College.”

The college is now poised to extend its sphere of influence beyond anything even the founder could have imagined. One just needs to read the headlines in any major newspaper to see that the international demand for expertise in disciplines related to biodiversity, sustainability and precision farming methods multiplies exponentially each year. It is important to note that these needs are at the core of what we do. At the same time, the local, regional and global marketplaces increasingly seek out well-rounded graduates with liberal arts, education, and business backgrounds to be the leaders of the future.

So with all this variety and breadth, who are we, at our core? How do we remain connected to our founder’s initial vision – and does that matter?

I would submit that it matters very much. And the good news is that, on many levels, the connection to our past remains both transparent and powerful.

While our focus has broadened, DelVal continues to emphasize the highest-quality, hands-on experiential learning in all of the disciplines it offers. We prepare students for leadership roles in service to the community, the state, and the nation by emphasizing scholarship fused with citizenship, the academic mixed with the practical, and by instilling a belief in the necessity of lifelong learning.

Many of our strengths also remain unchanged. DVC is still all about faculty/student relationships. Our students are taught by experienced professors, not by TA’s. And this is still a place where our students work

for what they get; they don't have a sense of entitlement. These are attributes that are increasingly rare at American colleges.

All of this is reflected in DelVal's standing in American education. This past fall, our incoming freshman class was the largest ever, boasting the highest GPA and average SAT scores in our history. Again this year, we have been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the top 25 comprehensive colleges in the northeast. These aren't my accomplishments – they predate my time here – but hey, I can still brag!

Because of the far reaching vision of our founder and the leadership of educators like James Work, Joshua Feldstein, and many others, DelVal is not just a little farm school any more. And I believe our founder would have been very proud of that!

So there is much to celebrate -- and yet, there are challenges. Inevitably, with so much growth and expansion has come some confusion about our purpose. There are ways in which we sometimes lack a clear focus – not in the work conducted by any of our individual programs and departments – but in the ways that those programs and departments relate (or sometimes do not relate) to one another. The parts are all in working order, but they do not always add up to something greater than their sum. We do not always make the most of our opportunities.

And so, I believe, we need a vision for Delaware Valley College that integrates all the different aspects of the institution.

Now, you may say, who is this Irish guy who lived on the Upper West Side of Manhattan until a year ago – who is this newcomer to come tell us his vision for an institution with 112 years of tradition? And the answer is that I'm not here to tell you that. I am here to engage the entire DelVal community in creating a shared vision, because, as my good friend Warner Burke, a faculty member at Teachers College, likes to say, people only support what they hope and help to create.

And so, today, I am formally sounding the call for a searching examination of DelVal that will ask, among other questions:

- What are the environmental, social, political, and economic challenges facing our graduates, and what do they need to know and learn in order to be productive citizens in the 21st century?
- What should constitute a DVC education in the next 25 years?
- What are the common threads that bind together the totality of DVC? And, more importantly, how can we knit these threads into a compelling call to action which will:
- Best focus our energies in service to our students?
- Mobilize to help our region, our nation, and the world meet the challenges of this new century?
- And enable us, as an institution, to move from being merely very good to becoming truly great?

These questions have been posed at DelVal before, but this time we must work together and commit the necessary resources to answer them. And we must use empirical research to back up our conclusions when it is feasible to do so.

As I said earlier, I've spent the past nine months talking with many of you and, more importantly, listening. And what I can tell you, as a result of those conversations, are some of the key opportunities and challenges that a shared vision for DVC must address.

First is the need for an integrating principle. By that I don't mean some sort of pronouncement about which prescriptive course of study represents the true DelVal. An integrating principle is NOT about whether our students take agriculture or business or chemistry or education or liberal arts. Instead, it's about who our students must become by the time they graduate – the habits of mind and the skills and attitudes they must have in order to be prepared for life in the 21st century and not just narrowly trained for their first job.

This leads to another set of challenges – at the head of which I put “engaging with the community.” I want this college to be an intellectual and economic resource for Doylestown, this region, and this State. Certainly we do that now, through such partnerships as

- The Pennsylvania Biotechnology Center of Bucks County, which we operate jointly with the Hepatitis B Foundation under the superb leadership of Dr. Timothy Block.
- Our “Bucks Back” program, created with Citizens Bank and the Bucks County Foundation, in which our students help eligible area residents prepare their tax returns and identify savings in earned income tax credits that can substantially affect their lives;
- Through Professor Eve Minson and her students’ work with the Heritage Conservancy right here in Doylestown;
- And through our alliance with Vail Garvin and the Chamber of Commerce, including a substantial Small Business Administration grant we coordinate for online professional education targeting small businesses in Bucks County.

But we need to do more – much more – and we can, and we will, both by reaching further out into the region, and the Northeast in general, and by looking for connections that truly become part of our curriculum and research, and that make the College an intellectual resource for our geographic area.

Equally important is the challenge – and opportunity – of engaging internationally, because our students will be living in a global, interconnected economy and world. Again, we do a great deal already in that regard, including our work in assisting the University of Ulster in Belfast, Northern Ireland, to develop a Masters Degree Program there in Food and Agribusiness; the Cooperation Agreement we maintain with Beijing Forestry University and The People’s Republic of China; our Tropical Ecology Course in Costa Rica; and our exchange program with the University of Podlasie in Poland, named in honor of Mr. Edward Pizek, founder of the Copernicus Society of America.

These are excellent efforts, but we must create others that are even more substantive – that offer our students in-depth residential experiences – that are powerful academic and cultural programs, and that stand as models for 21st century international education.

The bottom line is that we need to have more international students matriculating here at DelVal, and more of our own students doing the same abroad.... and, in particular, putting their leadership skills and their business and agricultural education to work in the developing world. For we have much to teach about basic agronomy, food production and environmental management, and equally as much to learn about the huge food provision failures and energy source issues in many of these regions.

I want to stop on that last idea for a moment – the notion that we have as much to learn from people in other countries as they do from us. Because implicit in that challenge is still another one: the need to foster

a truly broadminded climate here at DelVal characterized by diversity, tolerance and respect for the dignity of all the members of the human family. For if we are to reap the benefits of engaging with new mindsets and disciplines, we will need to set aside our cultural and intellectual preconceptions and open our hearts and minds to what is genuinely new.

This isn't just the right thing to do, in some politically correct sense – it's what we must do to fully enrich our college and ourselves.

And it's also our legacy – for although Krauskopf founded this institution primarily with the needs of young Jewish men in mind, he insisted from the first that the school be open to all faiths and backgrounds. It was the same breadth of perspective that made him, as I have already described, a social activist who believed that education should address the needs of all people and that made this institution, as the New York Times wrote in 1897, truly national in scope.

Indeed, without that kind of mindset, we won't be able to take on perhaps the most important challenges of all – the ones that go beyond our institution, that face the entire human race. Challenges such as:

- how to function in, regulate, and prepare for the impact of a global economy;
- how to deal with massive public health challenges;
- how to deliver education to the much broader world audience that now hungers for it;
- and how to deal with the growing threat to our environment.

Let me focus on that last issue for a moment, because it is so clearly an area in which DelVal can – and, I believe, must – realize its potential to make a major impact. Again, I turn to our own history for precedent.

In 1926, through the auspices of one of our trustees, Abraham Erlanger, DelVal convened a five-day conference in New York City of leading educators, agriculturalists and Governors' and Mayors' representatives from nearly every city and state in the Union. The purpose of the event, which was widely reported by newspapers throughout the country, was to present and analyze the importance of new trends in agriculture such as: the influx of men and women from farms to cities; the depletion of the rural population; the growing role of women in farm management; and much more.

As Herbert Allman, another president of this institution, would later say, it was a watershed moment for DVC. At a time of profound change, the college was fulfilling perhaps the most important function of an institution of higher learning: that of a neutral convener, an honest broker of ideas that brings together experts from across disciplines to study complex issues and explore solutions to significant societal problems.

I believe we are at an analogous moment today, when the rapid and unchecked growth of the world's population, and of businesses and political entities, is having a profound impact not merely upon agriculture, but the environment as a whole. The world economy is projected to grow by over 400 percent in the next 40 years. Population growth is expected to be in the neighborhood of 50 to 75 percent.

As my friend and global thinker Michael Gallis states: "Even as geographic and political borders continue to be redefined, the world is remapping itself economically into new global trading blocs."

And all of these changes are having a profound impact on the environment. Yet as causes of change, they aren't merely environmental problems. They are human network problems as well. As such, they require us to develop multifaceted solutions that reach across a range of disciplines. And that, of course, makes them education problems, as well.

The central issue on the table is no longer that of environmental sustainability; while very very important, sadly, the moment for that discussion has come and gone. Instead, the need now is for discussion of environmental restoration – repair of damage already done – and for education that is not only scientific in nature, but that also emphasizes the social responsibilities that all of us – individuals, businesses, political entities – must shoulder.

DelVal is well positioned to help convene that conversation – certainly on a regional scale, and hopefully, as in the past, as a player on the national stage. With that in mind, I am proud to announce that during the coming year, DVC will host an externally funded, national, perhaps international, symposium. It is tentatively titled: Beyond Sustainability: The Need for Environmental Restoration. This event will bring together experts from inside and outside the college, in our core areas of study – agriculture, business, the liberal arts and sciences, and education – to address the broad range of issues embedded in this important topic and to identify practical ways to realize the admonition that we must “Think Globally...Act Locally.”

The idea for this event grew out of a meeting I had with about 15 faculty members from across DelVal’s curriculum. I approached this group with hopes of winning their buy-in for a conference of this kind. To my surprise and delight, they decided to go me one better by proposing that we commit to the establishment of an Institute at DelVal, interdisciplinary in nature, that will continue the conversation and take on the issue of environmental restoration – of how to repair systems that are breaking down.

I am thrilled with this idea both because I believe it is right for our times and our institution and also because it gets back to the notion I raised earlier: it is the beginning of developing an integrating principle for DelVal. But in order to realize its full potential, an Institute such as this needs to have external partners as well. And for DelVal this is an opportunity for outreach.

I envision having many partners, from large research universities and small, regional private and community colleges, to local and national conservation and environmental groups. I also see us working with regional and national educators at the K-12 level; I would also include in this endeavor media and health professionals, business leaders and seminal thinkers like those sharing this stage with me this afternoon, as well as a number of you who are in this audience today. You know who you are. . . I’ll be in touch!

None of this will happen overnight. In both our efforts to fashion our own future and our work to remake the world, we must remember that change is incremental. As my new friend and alumnus Tom Watson likes to say, “Rome wasn’t built in a day – but it was built.” Or as Admiral Hyman Rickover once said, “Good ideas are not adopted automatically. They must be driven into practice by courageous patience.”

So thank you again for being here today – and for your OWN courageous patience in listening to me. I’ve done a lot of talking today, but I assure you that I intend to continue listening in the months and years ahead.

I hope you are as excited as I am about the future of this great institution. I hope that, when we all look back, many years from now, we remember this occasion not merely as the inauguration of a new president, but as a moment of synthesis between our past and present.

Because the challenge before us is clear: On this 150th anniversary of his birth, our founder’s vision is alive and well. It is up to us to realize it once again in a different time.

Thank you.

Dr. Joseph Brosnan





What Others See (When They Look at Me)

They see her almond eyes reflected clearly,
Darkened skin meshes with dark brown eyes.
Long forgotten scars stand white against her skin,
She's not the appearance of anyone's angel.

Once so sweet and innocent,
She pushes you away in fear of being rejected,
Begging for someone to secure the lover inside her heart,
Without tearing the sutures of her old faded scars.

She's like barbwire and roses,
So beautiful but so hard to hold.

As stubborn and heartfelt as they feel she might be,
She's controlling her future without compromise,
And she's living for love
But her love isn't free.

Sasha Bellaman
Third Place Literature



Where will our Hearts lead Us?

*It all starts when our eyes meet,
Little cute looks, quick witted hooks
With mischievous glances in between.*

*Late sleepless nights,
Filled with gripping conversation.*

*When friendships meet new dizzying heights,
Where will our hearts lead us then?*

*Keeping quiet is hard when
Our heads say "No," but
Our hearts say, "Yes."
It's easy to give our regards away.*

*Some people are heaven sent
While others are hell bent.
But no matter which of your intentions show,
You make my heart remain forever aglow.*

Samantha Kelly



Photo by Shaina Crouse





I was Running

I was Running through the woods.
so fast

No one on two legs could catch me.
but I didn't have to worry about that.
No one was within 15 miles of me.

I was Running
What else did I need?

I Ran across a little meadow with a creek in it.
Deer that were grazing straightened up and started Running with me.

I was keeping pace with them
but then they turned off in the woods
I kept on going straight

I was happy
Has anyone else ever experienced this?

Running
with nothing around except the Forest

I laughed it was filled with Joy
It didn't sound like my Laugh but who cared

I was Running
Two wolves looked up as I passed

They knew the joy of Running
They knew the joy of Friendship

I pushed myself harder
faster and faster

Nothing could catch me.

I was Running
There up ahead was a cliff
but I wasn't going to stop
I didn't want to

I didn't want to lose this feeling of happiness
It came closer and closer
I was in a full out sprint
No one could ever catch me.

I dodged a tree and jumped out as far as I could
I closed my eyes as I felt the wind whip around me.

I was Flying.
I laughed again exhilarated
Flying and Running; it was the same

It gave me the same feeling of Joy.

I realized I was Free

Nothing could Touch me

Nothing could Hurt me

I was Free

I was Happy

Then the cold water rushed over me

and I fought my way to the surface

I floated on my back in the lake
and looked up to where I jumped from

The feeling of Joy was fading
my life rushed over me like the water
but there was still that warm spot

The Memory of it

It is what I Live for

what I Fight for

what I'll probably Die for

That feeling of Joy
to Know

for even one Second

That I was truly Free

Talesha Karish



Photo by Amanda Sidler

Sunrise

The sun is rising,
It's the break of dawn,
And the sky is painted in delicate colors,
The world begins to awaken with the trilling of birds.
Trees blaze in the morning light that
Sparkles in the dew covered grass,
Like hundreds of tiny diamonds,
The sun has risen
And bathes the world in its newborn light.

Sarha Bellaman

Hasty Up and Down Confession

And

all too often

I stumble across a page separate from anything else
left there as though your diary dissolved
and reformed on spiral torn pages
fluttering quietly with your feelings
throughout the room

And

even though I know that's yours
-your words, your feelings, your soul on paper

I read it

I can't help myself

The glimpses of your heart so beautifully portrayed
drag me in till I'm flushed with guilt
my eyes still eating up your thoughts
It's nice to see inside you sometimes

The humilt that beats in me is echoed in your handwriting across the blue lined page
I can't help but smile as I hurriedly cover the evidence
I'll never tell you that I read these - that I've seen inside your heart
You'll never find this sheet with my hasty up and down confession scrawled across it
But thank you, for reassuring me that you feel as I do.
Thank you for living with me, like me, on paper.

Lela Berger



Photo by Amanda Sidler

Keys

We open the way to many things,
One never looks the same as another,
Getting lost is an easy thing to do,
Clinking and clanking are the sounds we sing.

We gather in large groups without a purpose,
Forged from the earthly elements,
I can close a door and keep you out,
Or open them and let you in.

Our purpose can be of a spiteful nature,
As a group we are chaotic,
But alone hidden secrets are revealed.

Sarha Bellaman

A Warrior No More

What happens...

When a warrior loses his will to fight?

When he can no longer defend the things he cares about?

When the image of strength he projects works too well?

When the ones he needs to comfort him believe he is fine?

When he is believed to be above all things mortal?

When a hero's image is more than he could ever live up to?

When what must be done goes against everything you hold dear?

When your heart and mind are at war while your body weakens?

When you can barely see who you are, let alone your enemy?

When all you've worked for is thrown into the shadow of doubt?

When the one you need and the one you want are the one who wants nothing to do with you?

When your image now becomes your enemy?

When the true failure of disappointing yourself is all you can see before you?

When the mind loses its edge, the edge that has cut your path thus far?

When the heart betrays everything the mind knows to be right?

When the guardian's charge has reached its destination?

When the ship is safely at harbor; for whom does the lighthouse shine?

When a warrior can no longer be a warrior?

When his strength turns to tears, hidden behind the image of the hero he once was?

When what you've become is all that you hate, but you can't do a thing to stop it?

When the fight is no longer worth fighting?

When the hero needs someone to turn to?

When the hero is alone in his darkest hour?

When the hero is exposed for the mortal he is?

When a hero can no longer help the ones he would die to protect?

When the night no longer brings peace?

When the sun no longer warms?

When the sun turns its back?

When the heart and mind are broken, and the body is not far behind?

*When the thing you long to say the most is forbidden by your code?
When the code becomes your greatest burden?
When you tire of trying to make the blind see?
When you blame others for what is not theirs?
When the only one to rightly shoulder the blame resides within the mirror?
When your weakness may be your only hope for strength?
When the ray of hope has receded nearly out of sight?
When acceptance comes before the thought of resisting?
When the eternal flame goes out?
When the one that is needed can no longer be there?
When none understand?
When none should?
When one should endure in silence, but instead howls to the night sky?
When the burden simply becomes the act of living?
When the reasons to hold in simply fade away?
When the warrior is a warrior no more?*

David Martin



Just what I need

Did you give me just what I need?
Do I have to be alone to be something?
Do you know me that well?
that you know I have to be tested to be strong?
That I crave to be on my own
But I can't leave you behind.
Is that why you pushed me away?
So I could finally find my wings
But I'm scared
I want a hug
I want someone to tell me it's going to be okay
I want someone to tell me what to do
But you believed in me
You wouldn't have pushed me if you didn't think I could do it
You believe in me
That I won't fail
And that is what scares me
I don't want to fail you
But maybe that fear is holding me back
If I didn't have that fear
Maybe I would try new things
I would fail at some
Probably at most
But at some I would succeed
I would be the person you think I can be
So should I leave it all behind?
Forget about my past?
Look to the future?
But I can't forget my past
It is what makes me me
All the bad things that shaped me
Then what you shaped me into

I don't want to lose that person I had been
But a little bit of that person slips away each day
I want to be proud
I want to be strong
I want to stand up for what is right
I want to make you proud.
I still remember that day you said you were proud of me.
It was the happiest day of my life.
I never told you thank you.
I never told you how much that meant to me.
So I want to say it now
I love you
And you meant the world to me
You proved that you don't have to be blood to be family
To make someone proud of me
And for them to mean it
was all I could ever ask for
I want to make you proud
and so I will follow my dreams
I will be good and have pride
I will have honor
I will change the world
And when I am asked who influenced me and who I'd like to thank,
Who I dedicate this book to, this building to, this award to
I will remember you

Talesha Karish

Savior

I.

Standing on the edge of a breakdown
twelve hours to go till the clock strikes midnight.
My heart races and breaks at the same time.
Goodbye love, you will be missed.
Goodbye love, I have no one here to comfort me.
Lover is seventy miles away.
Best friend, Goodbye love, has left forever.
Who can I run to?

II.

1:34 PM, the phone rings.
the name offering hope for a saving grace,
something to keep me from breaking.
Down the stairs, to the door,
big ears and a swishing tail,
sanity for the evening.

III.

I tell my story, choke on some words along the way
concern in his eyes.
A hand on my back
a wet nose and warm fur on my lap.
Saved for the time being.

IV.

The dreaded hour approaches.
11:59 the numbers say.
It's still night time, technically.
You wrap your arms around me
and turn my face away
from the glowing red lines.
You tell me not to worry,
that you'll be there for me
when the hour strikes.
I cringe, knowing it's time,
you tighten your hold
and I close my eyes.
Savior.

Brittney Soban

The Wanderer and Death

Many years ago there once lived a man,
who possessed a rather long lifespan.

Immortal they called him, though that was not quite true,
you see, he only lived to be five hundred and two.

He traveled to the north, the west, and the east,
yet it seemed no matter what, he could not find peace.

What he was searching for no human will know,
or perhaps he was fleeing a tireless foe.

He did many deeds both good and bad,
which left many people feeling happy and sad.

He explored far and wide as his years weighed him down,
the unrelenting tide of time he sought to confound.

How he toiled and fought to complete his quest,
and yet he wound up like all the rest.

Solemnly he surrendered without malice or hate,
at long last he was ready to accept his fate.

How might I know of this story, you ask?
I was the one who caught him at last.

Jonathan Zadrejko

Art by Sarka Bellaman

Fallen

The light from the tree had faded away.

It was burned by the red hands of her kin.

And she is left humming mama this day.

This brutal fire enclosed her in chains—
What was once love blew away with the wind.
The lips of the tree sang goodbye to her name.

Scarred it collapsed in its ashes so grey,
Each branch destracted down to the skin
And she is left crying mama this day.

Apple quarreling, leaves recklessly slain.
In her chest lies a crack deep in the brym
Breaking the legacy scores had attained.

Barricaded in hate, the light did fade.
How blood upon blood became so thin.
If only, she cried, innocence could persuade,
It may have mended the tree that fell yesterday.

Brittany King

From Your Loving Father
September 20th, 2007

*I have so much support
And time that doesn't end*

*And I'm filled
With so much to do
I have such great comfort
Peace and many friends
But somehow I'm still*

*Stuck on you
~Bridge~*

*And I cry out your name
I reach out to you
I want you to change
To come and know the truth*

~Chorus~

*'Cause I've loved you all this time
And I want you to be happy
I know everything about your life
But you know nothing about me*

*Turn around and believe
Hear what I say
I want you, my baby
But you just walk away*

*You're the apple of my eye
And you're my everything
And I know
You've heard of me before*

*I don't want to see you cry
So come back to me, your King
I won't let go
Of the one I adore
*Repeat Bridge 1 and Chorus **

-Bridge 2-

*And my heart breaks
For you, but it's never too late
And no matter how long it takes
I will always wait
*Repeat Chorus **

Kalina Desseaux



Sea of Memories

Looking down

Relative safety of my bland everyday hands

An errant sparkle winks, having caught my gaze

Its net drags me back into the memories

I was trying to escape

The feel of your arms

Your used to be familiar scent

The touch of your lips

I struggle harder against the net

trying to keep my last bubble from escaping

I've run out of air

Flooded with memories of your eyes

Their language, their willingness to stare into mine

Their startling colour

As I slowly fight my way back to the surface

my hands blur

my eyes trying to get all the salt water out

Lela Berger



Truth

I.

I sit,

tick, tick, tick,

time goes by. 30 grand a year for me to sit.

Big brother is out,

twin brother drops out.

"I'll go back, I promise!"

I hope he means it.

Tick, tick, tick,

each day means I'm still too far from him.

Tick, tick, tick,

the phone rings, it's him.

We say love and talk of cold nights

without the comfort of each other's arms.

The phone rings again, a friend.

Another night, another trauma,

bridges beckon with promises of a new life

one of the boys from home answered the call.

Jump, jump, jump,

no splash, missing, another face on the side of a milk carton.

Headlights rush past, I crash to the ground,

hand hurts, there's a dented sign.

Home again, comfort in his arms,

not enough to soothe the trauma that comes

when the room goes dark.

Tick, tick, tick,

three months go by in a blur,

I missed the call on Christmas morning.

Tick, tick, tick,

is it worth 30 grand for me to sit?

Tick, tick, tick,

back again

new class, sit with the ticks and tocks,

summer comes, not the end,

not at all.

I

Nine months since,

jump, jump, jump.

Two years since,

love, love, love.

*My boys were never friends
but at least one is still here.*

Is he the one?

"The hell if I know."

But I can hope.

*Tick, tick, tick,
third semester, back again.*

Goodbye 30 grand.

Parents are proud.

*Tick, tick, tick,
almost a year since
jump, jump, jump.*

Eleven months, five days to be exact.

*Also two years and two months since
love, love, love.*

Stressed out, maxed out, drained.

Yeah I'm going down.

Interviews scare me,

*I need the money
don't want the job.*

Too anxious.

Can't balance trays,

I shake worse than the clientele.

Only time will tell.

Brittney Solorio

Karma's Feather

Watching from the shore line
A slice of feather through the air
Somberly I watch the growing darkness coming near
Engrossed in shallow pleasure
terrified, refusing to see the light
Blinded by the fears that haunt you at night
Silently I cry desperate for you to hear
The thunder in the distance cackling with glee
The storm will ravage through
the ground will fall out beneath you
Engrossed in the lies that you have fed your soul
that time will wait, when you return all will be well
the heartbreak you caused will not matter
Love will overpower
Bitter lies to soothe your ego
Refusing to acknowledge what your heart must know
No words will reach
you've covered your eyes and turned away
The shoreline so distant for you to hear my cries
And so with pain I stand aside
Leaving you to fall, to live your lies
All too soon it will crumble around you
All to soon I will move far past you
A glimmer of wings catching the light in the sky
right beside you, your covered eyes refusing to see
The monster inside you growling with glee
it will be satisfied this creature you've created
for it's far to late for my love to defeat it
with horror and tears I hold my breath
watching and waiting
I turn away
Soaring above the chaos and disarray
For the callous monster you've grown to be
cannot, will not defeat me
The storm growing stronger, a threatening pulsing force
I stand aside so it may follow the course
with glee it descends, covering you whole
Until at last satisfied it releases its hold
Watching in silence as the gasping begins
A strike of wings, a slash and burn
Scarlet wings hold me above
free from the chaos that was our love
Finally after the storm is clear
Serenity in sight
a soothing touch to heal the burns
Ravaged by the pain brought upon by yourself
Shall you look above and see what you have lost
Gazing below back down to earth
back on the one I loved
What shall be my call
which path do I chose
Do I fly to you or away from you?



Photo by Shaina Cramond



Photo by Zee Swanson

Lone Wolf Cries

I don't exist
I'm just a shadow
I go unnoticed
A living Ghost
~Bridge 1~
Oh, whatever came between
The love I once knew
I'm lost and lonely
With no one to turn to
~Chorus 1~
And now I think I know
Why the Lone Wolf cries
Why he howls
When no one replies
Because after all I've seen
I've realized the truth
And found out what it means
To be alone in a crowded room
And to have no one
To help you along
The Lone Wolf screams
What's wrong with me and when will I belong

Ridiculed and put down
I have lost all hope
In finding friends that can't be found
How I hate being alone

~Bridge 2~

But I won't trust in anyone
For me, it's just too late
The damage has been done
And cannot be erased

~Chorus 2~

And now I think I know
Why the Lone Wolf cries
Why he feels so cold
The pain in his eyes
Because no one answers me
Even though they hear my call
Love is far beyond my reach
And no one catches me when I fall
Yet still in hope
I sing this crying song
And like the Lone Wolf, I scream
What's wrong with me
And when will I belong
Oh, when will I
Belong

~Bridge 3~

'Cause no matter how I long for love
I'm far too afraid
To ask for acceptance
Too scared of what they'll say
They all walk away
They all walk away

~Chorus 3~

And now I think I know
Why the Lone Wolf cries
Why he howls
When no one replies
After losing everything
After all that I've been through
I have even seen
The dark side of the moon
And there's still no one
To hear my dying song
Just a Lone Wolf I scream
What's wrong with me
And when will I belong
Oh, when will I
Belong

The urge to hunt is in us all.
To seek and to chase,
both the large and the small.

Sharp eyes and a clever brain.
created sharper tools that changed
the game.
The risks of the hunt are no longer
the same.

A bug in a jar,
or a deer on a car.
The capture of prey
regardless of size is the prize
that reminds us all
of our true nature.

Dr. Chris Tipping

The goal of life
is to make more copies.
Creating generation after generation
of selfish wetware floppies.
Cells like tiny self-replicating machines
with hard-wired hard-drive genes.
Simple genetic codes programmed for
success,
Nothing more, nothing less.

Dr. Chris Tipping

Like a quiet shadow,
or a savage beast,
Death appears on silent feet.

Seldom seen until too late,
Death is the wax seal
on the letter of fate.

If Death should choose you
and take your hand,
go quietly,
for even if the winds of limbo roar
or the flames of the netherworld soar.
Remember...
from old life,
new shall rise.

Dr. Chris Tipping

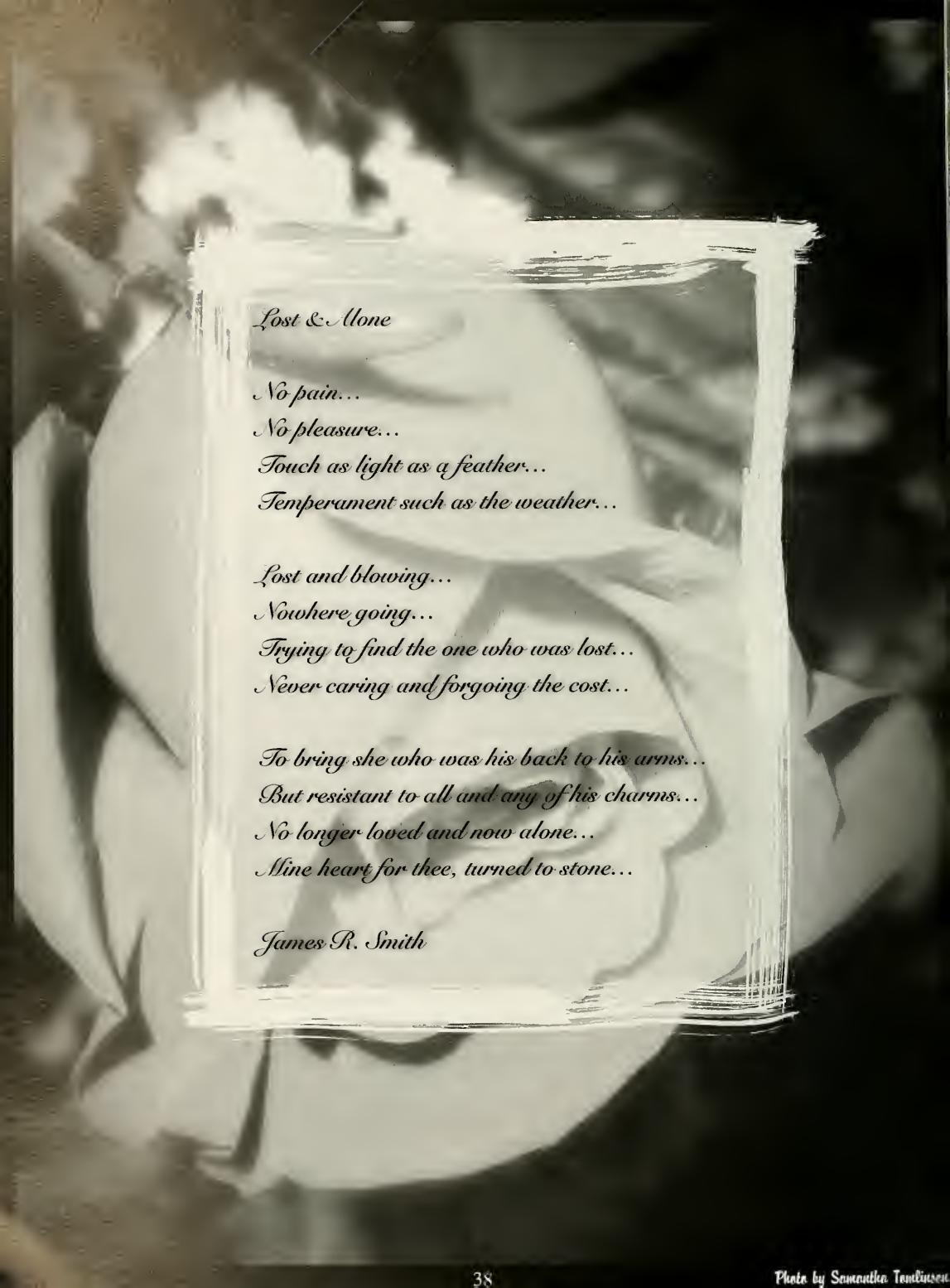


Photo by Jessica Moore

Our College Years

Our college years are some of the most important years of our school career. When we enter through the doors of college for the first time, you tend to have some fear. No matter what, you always have to look up to a better tomorrow. Look past all of the mistakes and all of the sorrow. Look forward to the future and not the past, for if you don't you will have many regrets fast. Keep your head up and don't ever look down. Make these years count and do not mess around. For these are the years you will remember always. So don't be scared to say hi to someone new in the hallways. Don't let anyone hold you back from what you want to do. For they may think they know what you want or need, but they really have no clue. Be true to your school and make a lot of friends. For before you know it your college years will end.

Victoria Frunzi



Lost & Alone

No pain...

No pleasure...

Touch as light as a feather...

Temperament such as the weather...

Lost and blowing...

Nowhere going...

Trying to find the one who was lost...

Never caring and forgoing the cost...

To bring she who was his back to his arms...

But resistant to all and any of his charms...

No longer loved and now alone...

Mine heart for thee, turned to stone...

James R. Smith



FOREIGN IN THE SPACE OF A BLINK

IN A PUBLIC PLACE.

JUST THERE WITH THE COMFORT Oozing FROM THE VERY

FAMILIARITY OF THE OLD

STRUCTURE, THE BRICK WALLS

THE WAY THE FLOOR REFLECTS BACK

THE LIGHTS,

EVERYTHING SEEMS THE SAME

AND THEN OUT OF NOWHERE, ALL

TOO QUICKLY A SILENT SEE-THROUGH

MONSTER SLIDES AROUND THE STACK

OF LIBRARY BOOKS OR THROUGH THE

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS OF THE CHURCH

OR DOWN THE SLICK SHINY FLOOR OF THE

GROCERY STORE AISLE

THIS SILENT CREATURE

THE MEMORIES OF EVERY GESTURE YOU

HAVE MADE THERE PREVIOUSLY

THE TIME YOU KISSED SO AND SO OVER

THERE IN THE NON FICTION SECTION...

OR THE TIME THAT YOU REALIZED, WATCHING THE LITTLE OLD LADIES IN THEIR UNWAVERING LOVE OF GOD, THAT MAYBE WHEN YOU GOT THERE YOU WOULDN'T BE LIKE THEM, WOULDN'T STILL BE ABLE TO GIVE YOURSELF UP TO AN UNSEEN PRESENCE, NO MATTER WHAT THE PROMISE...

OR THE TIME YOU LOOKED UP THE AISLE AND SAW THEM - TOGETHER

AND THE BITTERNESS FLOODED YOU SO HARD YOU COULDN'T EVEN BUY THE DELICIOUS LOOKING



Photo by Amanda Sidler

FRUIT YOU'D BEEN EYING, FOR FEAR THAT YOUR RAMPANT EMOTIONS HAD SOMEHOW CHANGED THEIR TASTE...

THE TIME YOU AND YOUR BEST FRIEND WERE JUST THERE, SITTING ON THE COUCH, HANGING OUT, AND YOU LOOKED UP INTO THEIR EYES AND KNEW SUDDENLY YOU HAD FALLEN AND FALLEN HARDER THAN YOU EVER SHOULD HAVE FOR THEM...

THE MONSTER HITS YOU SO HARD YOU LOSE YOUR BREATH AND PERHAPS YOUR EYES EVEN WELL UP - YOU WEREN'T PREPARED FOR THIS ATTACK...

FAMILIARITY ISN'T SUPPOSED TO TURN FOREIGN IN THE SPACE OF A BLINK.
THE SHOCK ISN'T SOMETHING YOU CAN EVER BE READY FOR AND AS YOU TURN TAIL AND ABANDON THE PLACE, STILL ABLE TO FEEL THE FAMILIAR UNDERNEATH IT ALL, BUT UNABLE TO DEAL WITH THE NEWNESS THAT HAS BEEN DROPPED UPON YOU.

YOU WONDER IF YOU'LL EVER GO BACK THERE. AND YOU KNOW EVEN AS YOUR QUICK STEPS CARRY YOU AWAY AND YOU ATTEMPT TO SWALLOW DOWN THE TEARS AND REGAIN YOUR BREATH



YOU HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE. WE STRIVE FOR THE COMFORT OF FAMILIAR AND MAYBE NEXT TIME THE MONSTER WILL TAKE TOO LONG TO ARRIVE AND YOU'LL BE SAFE THERE FOR THAT VISIT...PERHAPS THE NEXT AND THE NEXT EVEN.



AND WHEN IT ARRIVES AGAIN, THERE IS ALWAYS THE OPTION OF FLEEING UNTIL IT DISSOLVES BACK INTO THE SEPARATE QUIET WELL BEHAVED MEMORIES YOU HAD TUCKED AWAY.

LELA BERGER

2ND PLACE LITERATURE

"I Miss You" Petrarchan style

*There's a pain inside of me growing,
Taking form of an endless abyss
Fueled by the miss of your sensuous kiss.
This pain takes hold, and continues flowing.*

*Without you I feel weak, I can't keep going
On in this dog-eat-dog world, this
Is a mortified dream that seems to exist
In your absence, normality is not showing.*

*I will wake without you here,
And the world will not cease to spin.
My bleeding heart's ache will not disappear.*

*Yet, I will continue on with volunteer,
Filled with memories of our voluptuous sin.
And I'll be the one to pay the price, pay the price
to rise.*

Samantha Kelly

In the Corner of My Eye

*In the corner of my eye, I see an empty chair
In the corner of my eye, I see you standing there
I see the person I used to know,
I see wood and fire glow*

*The paths we've walked on snow and sand,
The hours we spent hand-in-hand
The footprints made on trails unmarked,
The stars we saw in skies of dark*

*I see your eyes, I see your stare,
But when I turn, all I see is bare*

*Because in the corner of my eye,
There's nothing really there*

Jen Forgasik



Photo by Sarka Bellaman

If All the World's a Stage...

They say all the world is a stage
I suppose this is true
I've never been much of an actor
At least that's what I thought
Is the statement so true then?
So true that we play our parts without knowing?
This unknowing actor
How he captures the audience
They follow each move, each struggle
Each battle, each loss and each hardship
So convincing in fact, that he sways
The harshest critic of all...himself
It seems he has become part of his own audience
But in this moment, he becomes separate
No longer the blind performer
From actor to deceiver
But no longer among those he deceives
How hard it becomes to act a lie you no longer believe
But as they say, the show must go on
Behind the cast, behind each actor
There is a crew to support
To manage what cannot otherwise be seen
But without it, the show would not be possible
But what happens when they too are part of the audience
When they too are deceived by the actor's show
Then the actor truly stands alone
His masks all that any may see
All by his own doing, his own undoing
They forget, there is always a mortal
Hiding within the impenetrable armor
Always a man behind the mask
The mask does not stand alone
The actor cannot wear his mask forever
But when that is all that any may see
What then? What must he do?
Sadly for him, there is no choice
For as they say, the show must go on...

David Martin



Art by Vic Gasser

ALWAYS SHARE THE BLANKET.

THE COLORS ARE TOO BRIGHT RIGHT NOW, STABBING INTO MY EYES, AND I CAN'T SEE THE GREENGREENGRASS OR THE MUDDY BLUE OF THE SKY, AS HER WORDS PIERCE AGAINST MY EAR AND I FEEL ALL MY MUSCLES JUST LOOSEN. I'M ON THE GROUND, THE DARK BLACK PAVEMENT, SO HARD AND UNFORGIVING. I COIL IN ON MYSELF, TRYING TO KEEP THE CELL PHONE BALANCED BETWEEN MY SHOULDER AND BRAIN SO THAT I CAN CONTINUE TO HEAR THOSE HORRIBLESOFTWORDS. I CAN'T SEE THOSE PEOPLE WALKING PAST ME, SCOFFING OR GIGGLING, THOSE STUPID STRANGERS THAT DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW HEAVY THE CLOUDS CAN REALLY BE WHEN YOU'RE SO FAR FROM THE TRAGEDY BACK AT HOME.

THE GUILT BITES AND SNARLS AT THE KNOTS OF MY SPINE AS I CONTINUE TO HUDDLE IN THE SLOWSLOWRAIN AND THOSE STUPID STRANGERS CONTINUE TO WALK AWAY FROM MY GRIEF MOTTLED GAZE THAT CAN BARELY FOCUS ON THE DAFFODILS THAT ARE MY FAVORITE SWAYING YELLOW IN THE HAZE.

HIS FEET SOFT ON THE BRILLIANT GRASS. A QUICK SMILE IN THE BREEZE. QUIET BROWN EYES FLASHED UP TO THE POURING SUN. A FENCE GNARLED BEHIND HIS SWEET FACE.

"HE'S BEAUTIFUL," THEY USED TO CHIME.

"THANK YOU," I USED TO WHISPER, NEVER BREAKING AWAY FROM HIS PERFECT GLANCE BRIMMING WITH ALWAYS JOY. I AM HIS, I USED TO WANT TO SAY TO THEM INSTEAD. I WANTED THEM TO KNOW.

I STAND UP AND BEGIN THAT TERRIBLELONELYWALK, STILL HUNCHED AND CRYING, STILL LISTENING TO HER VOICE THAT THREADS MORE AND MORE. I OPEN THE DOOR TO MY ROOM AND IGNORE MY ROOMMATE AS I CRUMPLE TO THE TILES, SOBBOING OPENLY NOW. I CAN'T BREATHE. I CAN FEEL THE SQUEEZE OF MY HEART TRYING DESPERATELY TO FORCE BLOOD THROUGH MY VEINS.

SHE FINALLY STOPS TALKING. I DO NOT START, THOUGH. I JUST HANG UP. I HOLD ONTO MY KNEES INSTEAD OF HIS SHOULDERS SO WARM AND ROUND AGAINST MY CHEST AND I CAN'T FORGIVE MYSELF FOR NOT BEING THERE, FOR NOT SAYING GOODBYE.

I STAGGER TO MY FEET AND DAB AT MY FACE UNTIL IT ISN'T RIBBONED WITH AWFUL PATCHES OF ALCOHOLIC RED. I STILL HAVE TO CONTINUE WITH MY LIFE EVEN THOUGH I DON'T WANT TO. BUT I STILL GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS AND EVERYONE KNOWS, THEY CAN SEE IT, BUT THEY DON'T DARE COMMENT ON ME. THEY PRETEND THAT THEY ARE TALKING AS IF EVERYTHING IS NORMAL BUT THEY AREN'T SAYING ANYTHING TO ME WITH THEIR LOUDIGNORANTVOICES. I NOTICE THIS. BUT I DON'T GIVE A DAMN.

WHEN THE DAY IS FINALLY OVER AND I AM LYING IN BED, I CAN FEEL THE THROB AND SWELL OF MY HEAD, I CAN TASTE THE TEARS TREKKING FREELY DOWN MY CHEEKS. I NEED HIM. I MISS HIM. I LOVE HIM.

YOU WALK INTO THE ROOM. YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. SHE TOLD YOU. BUT MY WORDS ARE SWALLOWED, JAGGED AND STUCK TO THE SIDES OF MY THROAT. YOU DON'T SAY ANYTHING, EITHER. YOU JUST TAKE CAREFUL STEPS UNTIL YOU ARE ON THE EDGE OF MY BED AND THEN YOU SLOWLY LIE DOWN BESIDE ME. YOU STARE AT THE CEILING AS IF YOU KNOW WHAT IS TO COME AND YOU WAITWAITWAIT.

AND I CURL AGAINST YOUR BODY AS IF WE BELONG LIKE THIS, AS IF I'M ALLOWED TO DO THIS, AS IF IT'S ALL OKAY. AND YOUR HAND WHISPERS OVER MINE. AND MY HEAD RESTS ON YOUR SHOULDER. AND WE DON'T SPEAK AND I START TO SLOW DOWN ON THE TEARS AND WE DON'T MOVE BECAUSE WE FIT, WE REALLY DO, I ALWAYS THOUGHT WE WOULD.

"I LIKE HIM," I USED TO WHINE TO HIM. "HE HAS A GIRLFRIEND, THOUGH. IT'S A GOOD THING I HAVE YOU, YOU LITTLE WEASEL." AND HE WOULD GIVE ME A SLY SMIRK AND A KISS TWITCHED ACROSS MY NOSE TO LET ME KNOW THAT HE IS ALL I NEED TO BE OKAY.

BUT NOW I DON'T HAVE HIM. AND I DON'T HAVE YOU.

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO BE OKAY NOW?

BUT MY BRAIN SQUELCHES AND BURNS RIGHT NOW AND YOU'RE SO CLOSE AND WARM AND I CAN'T FOCUS ON ANYTHING EXCEPT THE MEMORY OF HIS PITTERPATTERFEET THAT NOW FEELS LIKE MY HEARTBEAT AGAINST YOUR RIBS AND I CLOSE MY EYES, CHASING HIM IN A DIRT FIELD OF BUTTERFLIES, AND I WON'T NOTICE THAT YOU HAVE LEFT ME, TOO, UNTIL THE MORNING.

SAM NAVARINO



Photo by Sarka Bellman

Red/Orange

When I see fire engine red,
it reminds me of how I am
bold and daring
Alluring, unselfish, and
as cheery as a cherry on top of
a sundae, as captivative as a rose
in full bloom,
As radiant as the sun on a warm
summer day, and as graceful as a
cardinal in flight
Also, as luminous as your face on a brisk
winter day.
Deep inside of me there is another
part, orange.
Orange reminds me of how I am,
as glowing as a carved pumpkin on
a brisk October night.
As wistful as a sunset on a warm summer
evening
As fast as a puck gliding across the ice,
As artistic as a pencil in the hand of
an aspiring writer
Also, as colorful as the leaves on
the trees on a crisp autumn day
And as cautionary as a cone on a construction
site of a new building

Victoria Frunzi

The Distant Shore

I stand alone, aware no more,
gazing upon a distant shore...

Longing to see and yet to not,
to gaze upon that distant spot...

And go to she who calls me there.
Yet should I go, I would despair...

I yearn and hope and wonder now, -
yet I no longer wonder how...

How to bring the Speech about,
it clamors, rings, shrieks, and shouts...

To cry and scream and cry no more...

If only to gaze...

On the distant shore...

James R. Smith



SURVIVE

WE WRITE LOVE ON OUR ARMS,
OUR DECLARATION OF STRENGTH
OF BEING ABLE TO STAND UP,
PUT THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER,
AND KEEP MOVING.

WE'VE LOST PIECES OF OURSELVES,
FRIENDS AND FAMILY ALONG THE WAY,
GONE ON THEIR OWN ACCORD.
WE DON'T KNOW WHO WAS THE FIRST,
TO TAKE THEIR OWN LIFE,
THE ONE TO START THE DISEASE.
BUT STILL, HERE WE STAND,
LOVE ON OUR ARMS.
IT'S JUST ANOTHER DAY
WITH OUR BADGE OF HONOR
(THIS TIME IT'S ACTUALLY VISIBLE.)

BRITTNEY SOBAN

Flawless Movie

The light through the window shades shines quilting patterns on the wall

And once again I can't let myself surrender to sleep

Preoccupied with you

I try to imagine only one thing, a needle, darting in and out of the walls patterned with light, hoping the repetition can drive you away

I know better

Yet here I lie, staring at the wall like it's helping, like it hasn't turned from a quilt into a big screen from a drive-in, flickering eerily with reruns of you.

the flecks of light age spots worn clean through memories that don't contain you

Your movie is flawless, Technicolor

I hate that you've made this wall so engrossing

The decorative shadows dancing around my eyes can attest to that

As my eyelids finally start to droop, the reel makes its stealthy transfer from the wall screen to the one on the inside of my eyelids

This movie is such a tear jerker, a real puller of heartstrings

The silent drops escaping from my eyes can attest to that

The movie slowly fades to black as my conscious mind surrenders to the unconscious realm of sleep

Every time I'm left wondering how it ends,

Your movie is a classic—always leaves me wanting more.

Lela Berger





Photo by Amanda Sidler

Perfect Symmetry

Perfect symmetry, you and me
Like two sides of a rotting tree
We're like two lines of a different thesis,
As together as broken puzzle pieces
Like two strange notes in synchrony,
We live in twisted harmony.

Your heart's the lock I lost the key
Both birthed in blissful irony
Like opposite sides who can't agree
We're just so perfect, aren't we?

But together we stay incredibly,
Bearing the cold storm's symphony
Like leaves of different color and dances
Speaking of lore and sweet romances.
Completely unaware of what our stance is...

Undeniable, imperfect, wavering like the sea
Perfect symmetry, you and me

Jen Forgasch



Photo by Tami Burkett

SUNSET

AS THE SUN SETS
AND SHADOWS LENGTHEN
CREATURES OF LIGHT RETREAT
INTO THE SAFETY OF THEIR DENS
CREATURES OF THE DARKNESS STIR
AWAITING THE NIGHT WHICH IS THEIRS

IN THIS TIME OF TRANSIT
AT THE HOUR OF DUSK
EACH CREATURE KNOWS ITS PLACE
EACH WILL PLAY ITS PART
SAVE FOR ONE THAT BELONGS
BOTH TO EVERYONE, AND YET NOWHERE

THIS CREATURE IS NEITHER
OF THE LIGHT OR THE DARKNESS
THIS WRAITH OF TWILIGHT
DUBBED A SHADOW OF THE WIND
THE CRY OF THE SUNSET
AND THE DAWN ARE HIS CALLING

A PRESENCE FELT AT TIMES
ONLY IN THESE HOURS
THEN GONE AGAIN
AS IF NEVER THERE AT ALL
OUT OF SIGHT AND MIND
THE SHADOW IS FORGOTTEN

LIKE A SHADOW
WHICH VANISHES UNDER THE MIDDAY SUN
THERE WHEN BECKONED
GONE AT ALL OTHER TIMES
SOLELY EXISTING TO SERVE
HIDING HIS PAIN INSIDE

IN HIS HOUR HE STANDS
FEAR AND DOUBT OVERCOME
AS HIS ELEMENT OVERTAKES HIM
AND HIS STRENGTH GROWS
BUT AS HIS ALLIES RETREAT
HE IS ABANDONED, UNABLE TO FOLLOW

THE UNSUNG SOLDIER
ALWAYS LEFT BEHIND
YET ALWAYS APPEARING
WHEN NEEDED BY THE LIGHT
BUT FOR THOSE FLEETING MOMENTS
ELSE HE IS ALONE

AS EVEN HIS HOUR GROWS LATE
NONE AROUND TO BEAR HIS LOAD
SHOULDERING A BURDEN NONE SHOULD BEAR
SILENTLY AND WITHOUT COMPLAINT
ACCEPTING HIS OWN PLACE
BLIND TO HIS GROWING WEAKNESS

BUT IS IT BLINDNESS?
OR KNOWLEDGE THAT MAKES
THIS PHANTOM ALL THE MORE REAL?
HIS PRESENCE HIS PROOF
IN DEFIANCE OF THE OLD ONE'S LAWS
PRESSING ON FOR THE GOOD OF ALL

ALL THOSE WHO WOULD FORSAKE HIM
TAKING FOR GRANTED HIS SERVICE
ASSUMING HIS ETERNAL PRESENCE
BLISSFUL IN ALL THEIR IGNORANCE
BUT FOR A FEW WHOSE AURAS RESONATE
STRIKING A CHORD WITHIN THE BEAST

ALAS EVEN THEY, THOSE CLOSEST TO HIM,
CANNOT COMPREHEND WHAT HE HAS ACCEPTED
ACCEPTED AS HIS LOT AND HIS PLACE
MISTAKING CONVICTION FOR STRENGTH
THE BEAST IS LEFT TO HIS DUTIES
IN THE DARK, NONE CAN SEE HIS TEARS

THE SUN TOOK PITY ON THIS BEAST
ITS LIGHT WARMED HIM FOR A TIME
BUT THIS GREAT PERFORMER OF FEATS THAT HE WAS
HID HIS PAIN FROM EVEN THE GREAT ORB OF LIGHT
AND ASSUMING ITS JOB DONE
THE SUN CAST ITS LIGHT UPON HIS OTHER FAMILIARS

AGAIN IN THE DARK, AND YET
NOW FEELING THE ABSENCE OF A LIGHT
ONE HE HAD NEVER KNOWN
BUT NO MORE WOULD THE SUN SHOW FAVOR
AND THE BEAST KEPT TO HIS CODE AS HE ALWAYS HAD
HIDING HIS PAIN AS THE SUN TURNED AWAY

UNKNOWING OR OTHERWISE, THE SUN CONTINUED
TO SHED ITS LIGHT ON THOSE AROUND
THE BEAST ALREADY FORGOTTEN
HIS PAIN ALL THE WORSE BECAUSE OF IT
HE KEPT TO THE CODE AS HE ALWAYS HAD
AND TUNED HIS BACK ON THE LIGHT

HIDDEN RAGE, SORROW AND LONELINESS
BENEATH THAT UNFEELING HIDE
HIS GUISE HAD WORKED TOO WELL
AND AT SUNSET, HIS ALLIES OF LIGHT LEFT HIM
AND IN THE DARKNESS, NONE HEARD HIS CRIES
NONE CARED TO SEE HIS TEARS

NONE TO EASE HIS PAIN
WHICH HE ALONE HAD BROUGHT DOWN
BY FOLLOWING HIS WAY AND HIS CODE
SO THE BEAST WAS LEFT AS HE HAD BEEN
ALONE WITH HIS PAIN AND REGRET IN THE COLD AND NIGHT
THE SUN HAS SET, AND THE HOUR IS LATE

WHY HAS THE HOUR GROWN SO LATE?
WHY IS THIS PAIN MINE TO BEAR?
AM I DESTINED TO BE ALONE?
WHERE IS THE PATH THAT WAS ONCE SO CLEAR?
CAN I OVERCOME MY GREATEST WEAKNESS?
OR WILL THE SUN FOREVER SET UPON THIS CREATURE OF TWILIGHT?

OF COURSE IT SHALL, AS REASON WOULD DICTATE
THE BEAST WAS NOT WORTHY OF THE SUN
HIS WAS THE ROLE OF GUARDIAN
THE WATCHER FROM THE SHADOWS
THE BEAST WOULD CONTINUE HIS VIGIL
AS THE BEAUTY SHONE, BUT NEVER FOR HIM

AS THE SUN SET
AS THE TEARS FLOWED
AS THE PAIN GREW
AS THE NIGHT GREW COLD
AS THE BEAST DREAMED
AS THE BEAUTY SHOWN

NEVER TO HAVE HER LIGHT
NEVER TO KNOW HER TOUCH
NEVER TO HAVE ANOTHER GLIMPSE
NEVER TO FEEL HER WARMTH
HIS PART FOR HER HAD BEEN PLAYED
HE WAS CAST ASIDE

ALL IS AS IT SHOULD BE
PRESENT WHEN NEEDED
FORGOTTEN WHEN NOT
IN PAIN OF EXISTENCE
UNWILLING TO YIELD
TOO WEAK TO CARRY HIS LOAD

NO LONGER ABLE TO FULFILL HIS DUTY
TO BEAR HIS LOAD AS HE ONCE HAD
THE SUN HAD MELTED THE ICE AT HIS CORE
HIS STRENGTH AND RESOLVE
NOW STOLEN BY THE SUN
ALONG WITH HIS HEART

NOW COMES THE CHOICE
HIS PURPOSE UNCERTAIN
HIS PATH ALL BUT LOST
FATE HAS LAID THE CHOICE BEFORE HIM
THE SHIELD OF DAY, OR DAGGER IN THE NIGHT

THE BEAST COULD NOT LOVE
LOVE WAS NOT HIS
NEVER WAS HIS TO KNOW
HEAD BOWED IN CONFUSION
MUST HE NOW TURN HIS BACK
ON THE SUN OR THE CODE?

THE SHIELD OR DAGGER?
THE DAY OR THE NIGHT?
SOLITUDE OR SOLACE?
ACCEPTANCE OR DISGUST?
BUT NEVER LOVE
FOR THE BEAUTY COULD NEVER LOVE THE BEAST

AND AS THE SUN SETS
ALL KNOW THEIR PLACE SAVE FOR ONE
NEVER TO BELONG, SERVING ALONE
FOR IN THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT
NONE CAN SEE MY TEARS
NONE CAN HEAR MY CRIES

DAVID MARTIN

SYMPORIUM HELD DECEMBER 4, 2008 IN MANDELL 114

For the benefit of this discussion I cannot prove anything. I cannot prove to you that I am Richard Ziemer even though I could show you documentation of my paternal and maternal ancestry that leads me back to the German warrior Sigmar on my father's side and to the battle of Hastings in 1066 on my mother's side. I cannot prove to you that I have type A blood, but that is what was verified by the collection center where I donate.

*I rely on documents compiled by 40 different authors over 1500 years of time recorded in the Bible. The Bible is an Oriental book, not a Western book; its contents and imagery are as foreign to me as they may be to any other Western reader. As varied as opinions are about all the collections of historical references made in it—that some are thought to be myths and therefore far-fetched or of God, the Being who is unobservable SPIRIT—, the historical lessons from it and from its linguistic evidence cannot be discounted. For example, the account of Jonah being swallowed by a great fish is a mystery or myth to some, but when one realizes that he was not the only person in history to have had this experience, the printed word remains quite credible. An account of the experience of a British sailor, James Bartley, who in 1891 was swallowed by a whale during a fishing expedition off the coast of the Falkland Islands substantiates that such an experience is not a myth but believable. Statements of Jesus Christ refer to Jonah being in the belly of the “whale”/great fish [Greek: ketos, hence the sign *Cetus* in the Zodiac] and that in the beginning God made humans male and female. (references: Matthew 12:40 and 19:4.)*

I believe human beings have a 3-part nature: body, soul, and spirit, based on Genesis 2:7. Mankind was made in the image [concrete—tselem] and likeness [abstract—Demuth] of God; breath of life (neshamah/spirit) was breathed into him, and he became a living being (soul/nephesh). There are parallel accounts to creation and the Flood in Babylonian literature that were found by George Smith and published in 1876 and translated from Akkadian and called THE CHALDEAN ACCOUNT OF GENESIS.

If I'm asked if I believe in evolution, my response would be “Evolution of what?” because to me evolution means “change.” Of course, I believe in change. But we cannot re-create or observe origins. From the eight people who survived the Deluge/Flood, the whole world has been populated by peoples now of various colors and genetic differences. What we do not know is if that variety of DNA lay in the original pair to begin with. WE ARE HERE and we should go from here, not bog down in what happened, how it happened, or what we may assume to have happened. Evolution is defined as and is taught as a theory. To me it should remain just that—a theory—, an invention within the last 300 years of human history to explain something that has otherwise been spelled out millennia before in historical documents. We should pursue larger interests than such a worn academic enterprise and benefit by what science can unfold for us.

What other choices do I have? I do not have to prove anything to myself or to anyone else; I merely have to believe and benefit by knowing what the historical records say.

—Richard C. Ziemer, Ph. D., Professor of Liberal Arts

Nature

*Turning like the seasons,
Ever changing and evolving,
Nature is truly an astonishing thing,
Loving and dangerous.*

*Expanding like ripples in a lake,
Streaming like a waterfall,
Rolling like a stream over rocks.*

*Dreaming like the slumbering animals,
Moving like a stealthy wolf,
Opening like the eyes of a newborn fawn,
Waiting like the patient cougar,
Dashing like a frantic deer,
Dancing like the hawk in mid-flight.*

*Feeling like the bristly pine boughs,
Scattering like fallen leaves,
Blooming like a wildflower.*

*Whispering like the breeze through trees,
Yelling like the wind in a canyon,
Ever changing and evolving,
Loving and dangerous.*

Sarba Bellaman

Photo by Fred Krenn

After the Full Moon

In my heart I wish I were so complete.

Something to be awed at.

Something everyone looks up to.

Wishing I could be so set in my ways.

Always having a steady path.

And for once to grin so sincerely

Like the man on the moon.

Who hides his many faces.

Except one: a smile.

And I look at it in awe, praying

That I could spend just one night

As the moon.

Sarha Bellaman

Faces of Luna

*Under the light of the moon
the heart is stirred
Sparking fire and love in the sultry call
The golden moon warms the siren
She searches for her lover, the one who doesn't want her
The pale mystery of the full moon
the mind wanders
longing and loneliness conspire in the heart
creating pain and torn apart
Half the moon recalls the memories
sweet moments of security
a coil of remorse for those who see the embarrassment
of an action ill done
who didn't see what he looked like in the light
who laughed of his spite and kissed him with love
The crescent calls for a time of release
sing and dance in the peace
who can't seem to forget his touch
Allow release, burn out the confusion, the pain, the need
Night hold back the memories
Don't bewitch those with heart
who can't ignore themselves in the dark
Instead give peace, serenity, knowledge of who to be
For under the moon in the night
That's when I wish to give up the fight
To give in to instinct, yearning, and pain
to cry for my broken heart
Not to obey the logic forced into me
to smirk and agree, continue fighting, learning more
If only it hadn't taken this
If only I could have learned, made myself learn without having to
lose his kiss*

by Samantha Kash

The Execution

A young boy sits alone in a room. All night he has waited, pacing the floor and waiting. He waits for the dawn, and the execution it brings. The dawn brings death, gradual and inexorable death. Countless times he has stared at the walls and paced the floor. Always the same number of steps from one wall to the other. Always the same marking on the wall. Never any change, and never any escape. Why, he asked himself for what seemed like the millionth time. Why had this befallen him? At such a young age. Too young for such a fate. For all his dread, pleading and questioning, the dawn drew ever closer. The first rays crept over the horizon, far sooner than expected, yet far too soon. How ironic the light of day signals descent into darkness for this boy. This young boy, and his execution. A strange calm came over him as the sun's rays washed over him through the window. This was not his choice, but it was his fate. Rather than fight the inevitable, perhaps it is best to accept what must be. Enough questioning as to why this is happening to him. Yet behind this front of peaceful acquiescence, the small boy still cried out, why must it be me? A man came to his door as the sun broke over the horizon. He was asked if he was ready, as if it made a difference. He nodded as a single silent tear rolled down his cheek. He was brought before the crowd, yet he heard and saw none of them. His eyes were fixed on his father, the sun glinting off the medals on his chest. Any resentment he had toward him was now lost as he silently pleaded with his eyes. If the plea reached his father, he showed no signs of it. His face unchanged, unfeeling. He simply nodded to a man behind the boy. At this nod, the boy took his position, now numb to what he knew was about to happen. As he took his position, he saw the sword being brought forth. The sword was presented, and taken. As if from another's eyes he saw the sword raised. It hovered at its zenith for a moment, shining in the sunlight. At another signal, the sword came arcing down, cleaving through the proffered neck. The boy's eyes now opened, staring at the head on the ground. The head of the man he had just executed. Had been forced to execute. The boy's father nodded grimly, his boy having completed the task he had set before him. The once gentle boy had become a killer. With the prisoner, his innocence too had been sentenced to die. It was as much his execution as the man before him. The head is removed now, and the crowd begins to disperse, but the boy remains. This is not, however, the boy that paced his room mere hours before. This is not the boy who cried out why so fervently. Not the boy who had silently pleaded to an unfeeling heart. That boy was dead. Killed by the stroke of the boy we see now. In his eyes, no longer the innocence he knew. Now the icy stare of one who has killed another. The same callousness he saw in his father's eyes. In his eyes you can see the remnants of the man he just killed, and the young boy who died with him.

David Martin



Photo by Dr. Karen Schramm

And maybe that was her downfall.

"Don't be sad." His voice, soft as snow, makes her glance away for a moment before she catches the flick of his angled smile again.

"You're leaving, though..." She's close enough to touch but far enough away that it hurts to make that connection only to break it again in five minutes and keep it broken until the next time he comes. Her fingers slip restless over her knees and her organs deflate.

There's a long minute of silence punctured by quiet filled sighs.

He pushes his mouth over hers and her heart gasps with stupid hope. She moves to fit inside his warmth more comfortably, just more. Her hands falter against his throat, his ribcage. She swallows the urge to cry and just works her urge to stay past his teeth. His tongue velvets into her mouth like autumn, like syrup, like blood.

She can feel his goodbyes bursting against her palms.

His hand steals her hand and begins to guide it down. Her stomach tightens, her mouth starts to close off the deep kiss.

Can he really be like all the other boys who treat her like a piece of meat that they can keep grilling until she's burnt?

He pulls her hand away from his body and laces his fingers in between hers, holding her so softly, so tightly, as if they don't need to ravage each other like ravens.

She almost chokes on the beauty of his palm pressed against hers like a secret. Tears bite fiercely now. She can't let him go.

The kiss deepens, becomes slightly aggressive, intensely passionate, fighting to hold on for as long as possible as his fingers caress over her knuckles winefully sweet.

And then, it dissolves into the most broken, most heartfelt, most gentlest kiss so slow on her mouth. Slowly he moves onto her neck, shadows of kisses, and then crunches her against his chest, his stomach, his whole body, and he just holds her, cradles her spine with his palm slow, as if she is a candle, as if she is his whole world, as if he would never hurt her.



Photo by Shaina Cranmer
Third Place Art

They sit like that as if it is the clock that lies...

He finds her mouth again, kisses her, and then whispers, "I have to go now." They walk out of the room, her curled like his intestines, his arm anchored around her waist. Their steps are measured until they reach his jeep. He tugs her against him for one more long kiss and she clutches at the collar of his shirt. He breaks away abruptly, hops into the driver's seat, and leaves her there, standing against the heaviness of everyone's stares as they shake their heads at her hopelessly hopeful hopes and she just watches him until she can't see him anymore, until she can't hear their burning sighs until she can't even feel her lungs hitching at his name swelling like a sob in her broken throat.

Sam Navarino



Photo by Heather Hagberg



The Piano

*You used to play all the time
That was back in the day
Before you walked out of my life
Before you drifted away
~Bridge 1~*

*And where we went wrong
I guess you'll never know
How much I missed that piano*

~Chorus 1~

*So Daddy, Daddy
Won't you play again
Oh please, oh please*

*Before this song ends
Make it sweet
Daddy, hit those keys
Play it once more for me*

*I miss how we used to talk
How you accepted me
Everything we had is gone
And all that's left are the memories*

-Bridge 1-

*But I never showed it
Never let anyone know
How much I missed
That piano*

Repeat Chorus 1

- Play it once more -

-Bridge 3-

*Oh Daddy, Daddy
I still love you
Even after everything
You put me through*

Repeat Chorus 1

*- Play it once more
For me -*

Kalina Desseaux



Photo by Joseph Kistler



Photo by Joseph Kistler



Art by Jackie Mojica
Second Place

21:16

It's winter now, December has arrived,
yet we still go ahead with our plans,
the city is calling.

We're an hour behind, hurry now,
fast food just isn't fast enough.
The truck roars to life,
as six bodies fly down the darkened highway.

December 5th, 2008, hour 21:16,
we've made it.

We feel the beat of the city beneath our feet,
and hurry across streets filled with traffic,
signals to stop and go, not things that get our attention.

We rush, a line of us cutting through the crowd,
and stare at the tree that from a distance looks like it is in flames.

We wander, the mission fulfilled, and find ourselves paying
six dollars more for a cup of coffee than we should be.

Laughter fills the night air, our breath appearing in puffs above our heads,
we criss-cross down the street, swerving through the other pedestrians.

I breathe in the biting cold air, smile,
the windows are down, the music up,
Broadway may never be the same again.

Our adventure may not belong on the front page,
but I know that the night has left a mark on me,
beneath the surface.

Somewhere underneath the chilled pale skin,
and frozen blue lips.

He tells me I should have borrowed his coat,
and instead of laughing at my frozen form,
the black fabric that was once his
becomes my blanket,
as we drive home
with '90s music filling the truck cab.

Brittney Soban



Photo by Heather Hagberg

Dear Boy,

There are some things that have come to my attention,
You have some flaws beyond comprehension.

Overall, you act as if you are three.
Your attention span is to the smallest degree.
You devour more than a swine,
Yet have the body like one of the Divine.

Your inability to make a commitment fills me with strife.
You wouldn't know a genuine decision to save your life.

The way you litter makes me bitter,
Your mimicking is sickening
And you don't know the meaning of cleaning.

But have no fear, my dear.
I love you in every which way,
And in the end I plan to stay.

Hell hath no fury like a woman's scorn,
But without you, this woman would be torn.

Samantha Kelly



Photo by Sarka Bellaman



TREES

TREES SPREAD WILD LIMBS,
THEIR BRANCHES SPREAD TO THE SKY,
IN A SILENT PRAYER.

SARHA BELLAMAN



Indication of Your Awareness

The thunder growls

My eyes search

looking for that flickering bar

but it's just slate gray

the orange indication of your awareness of me

missing

I never thought that bar could be so bleak

It's not the average gray associated with rain or snow

just the darkness of wet rock that the water flies past and over

I need you

and yet I fear that we're stifling us or maybe I'm just stifling you

Still the pressure of the water forcing us down into, onto the stone

separate rocks that seem immobile because of the rush of water around us

No way for a solitary rock to stop the flow

and although I'm rocking, it seems I've never been able to shift closer

I've almost lost the will to try

How come I can talk more to people who are basically strangers than to

you?

This isn't the way it's supposed to be.

My river is no longer getting me through-it's pulling me down

and you're like the surface, ever elusive

as my fingers grasp, outstretched, attempting to make it

before my air is gone,

before my lungs release the last gasp of everything I need to survive.

I'm floundering in the confusion of what I think I've done to us.

Everything seems to be yet another wave shoving me downwards.

I don't want this to be the end.

Lela Berger

Tranquil Night
By Lord Geovanni

Snow descends upon a frigid night.
Falling down from a stormy thundercloud,
Blanketing the Earth under the moonlight.
A sheet of stainless white developed proud.
Soon little critters come out for some fun,
To dance across land slumbering beneath.
A midnight chase abound, hidden from sun,
By absolute darkness draping a wreath.

Morning begins overlooking a scene,
Developed under skies and stars gazing.
Created by God, just what could it mean?
To him the animals 'joyed and praising.'

This chilly scene left all to remember,
Brought forth here from the cold month December...

Lord Geovanni

Joshua Della'Zanna



Actions speak louder than words

Time and time again you have given me words filled with hope and love
believing them I gave you my heart

Time and time again you disappoint me, hurt me with your actions

You gave me a vow on your love that no longer would you harm me, you strove to be noble
I was afraid, for so much did you offer, an offer you couldn't, you were not ready to fully pursue
a disillusioned boy who wanted to give his soul

I never asked for it, I never claimed to be able to care for it

for I was only a girl, young in body wise in heart, and I knew that you were not strong enough

Another promise made to me, this one of chastity and loyalty

merely days or was it only hours later, you betrayed me

in an act of fear, fear of yourself, of me, of the future and love you broke everything

Your bitter words hide your shame, your silence your pain

The fear seemed to almost eat you alive, and to stave it off you offered it the one thing that was as precise as the fear's strength, your love and our trust

So the trust was broken, like a tree uprooted from the earth, the love once as beautiful as a rose in bloom, wilted and became sick with rot

So now I look on the shambles of the past, of the girl and the boy and the love they had

Now I am different, I have reclaimed the fire within, I fly forward with my life

I wonder if you'll ever fit in

It is not pride that I am holding so dear, that is only part, no, it is my heart that I protect now

Twice you swore to do right by me, care for me the way one would for whom he loves, respects and trusts

Twice now for one thing or another you disappointment me, and for the longest time I took it as a bullet to the heart, believing it was all my fault, that I wasn't open enough, strong enough, that my love wasn't what you sought

Twice now I've come to realize after the swell of pain calmed and the storm set into the eye, it is not I who was to blame, but my lover

It is his fear that drove him insane, to do something so wrong

It is his pain and his fear that drives him to run, until finally he is worn out and wants to return

I welcomed you back slow and cautious, terrified of what I would find

I found a boy who believed he was a man, who thought that dressing up would be enough to play the part

He was wrong

It took the mightiest of falls to bring him down, to lay waste to all that he held dear

It took the hardest of blows to tear her down, a phoenix blown out by a hurricane wind

Only after the pain fell through, only after the tears and pain seeped out could she start to begin a new

I wonder what the journey is that your taking now

This journey that you had to leave me in order to seek, the knowledge that will come to you

It's not enough to just come back this time, it's not alright to believe that all will be forgiven and reborn

Trust is gained over the course of time, of keeping your word and reinforcing it with your actions

Respect is earned alongside the trust, respect that you do keep your word, that your actions back it up

For so long I've trusted you, and respected you

Time and Time again it hurts

I'm tired of watching you hurt me again and again, making new promises and then
another betrayal.

Regardless of what cycle was closed with your two brothers and the bitch

we have our own cycle to see through

Before it was I who revived us, now it must be you

So what the f*ck are you going to do.

by Samantha Kash

A Chocolate Gift

My little friend, you greet me
Always with a grin,
Wrapped orange, purple, and green striped foil
In various shades, colors, and tints.

Vanilla, strawberry, chocolate, and caramel---
The exhilarating flavors of chocolate bliss---
You are the most important ambrosia in the world;
You are tastier than my lover's sanguine lips.

Made from 100% cocoa and spices
From Chocolate Capital, Pennsylvania, way up north,
You make my tongue dance with your sensational taste;
You are my foundation---my creamy life support.

O' Hail ye small fluffy mountain tops for diabetes can never dismiss,
The pleasure perceived as well as given by a delectable Hershey's Kiss.

Karlena L. Brown
1st Place Literature



The Gleaner

High School Writing Competition

The English Department
is very happy to have sponsored its twelfth
high school writing competition,
which was designed to showcase the work
of young writers in the area.

SUPERIORITY

IT IS CLEAR THAT MAN
IS THE SUPERIOR BEING
ON THIS GREEN EARTH.

THE MAGPIE IS A GREEDY BIRD.
SHE HOARDS HER SHINY STASH
AWAY FROM PRYING EYES.

THE LION IS A JEALOUS CAT.
HE THREATENS THOSE WHO VENTURE
INTO HIS MIGHTY KINGDOM.

THE DOLPHIN IS A DRAMA QUEEN,
AND THE SMALLEST THINGS AMUSE HER.
SHE DIGS FOR DIRT ON OTHER DOLPHINS' DOINGS.

THE PEACOCK IS VAIN INDEED.
HIS VALUABLE TIME SPENT PREENING
LIKE A RUNWAY MODEL..

TO HAVE COMBINED ALL OF THESE CREATURES' FLAWS
INTO ONE BEING IS A TRUE ACCOMPLISHMENT.
THAT IS WHY MAN IS TRULY SUPERIOR.

MICHELLE BUESKING
COUNCIL ROCK HIGH SCHOOL NORTH
GRADE 10
MRS. BRENDA HALL

The Lucky Ones

A line of men, ready for war,
All with esprit de corps
Run from the trenches at the sound of a bell
Rush into battle, rush into hell

Fire in front and flames from behind,
Mines in the ground and death from the skies
A fight for survival, to come out ahead
A fight with no winners, 'til the last man is dead

As a deathly gas seeps from the ground,
Corpses form a hideous mound
The quicker ones have masks over their eyes
The slower ones? They can go blind

A line of men, scarred by war,
Stagger away, dazed and sore
The Lucky Ones, the ones that went blind,
They lie on the ground, while crows peck out their eyes

Kevin Guo
Council Rock High School-North
Grade 10
Mrs. Brenda Hall

Gripping Fear

*Our thumbs oppose and so must we
Indulge in violent treachery
Crossing fingers with every shake
'Til gnarled are we, decrepit and fake*

*One hairless finger may concern
A fiery man who might return
With five clenched tight into a weapon
One left unconscious, left to step on*

*Two fingers flaunted, a sign of peace
Can poke two eyes, pacifism ceased
And protruding thumbs will cause no cryin'
Unless it's Titus with his lion*

*But never have paws pulled triggers on fins
Despite the deathly razor ends
Claws retract when kittens wrestle
Switchblades become playfully hostile*

*Our thumbs oppose and so must we
Grasp knives and guns so frightfully
'Til crimson juice causes tools to fall
With a severed thumb, there's no violence at all*

*Chad Nobel
Council Rock High School North
Grade 10
Mrs. Brenda Hall*

"A Muted World"

*I have known the feeling of silence
That consistent mix of unpredictable feelings.
The silence of a nighttime stroll
at the end of a scorching, sizzling summer day.*

*And the silence of peace
And so I ask myself quizzically-
"What is the true purpose of speech?"
More things can be described far beyond
the chaining bonds of words.*

*There is the silence of contentment
When the long, laborious day is long gone
And you hang up your coat
to take leave on a hammock in your yard
Glass of frothy root beer in hand,
three ice cubes tossed in.
Daydreaming of past, nostalgic days*

*There is the silence of love
When two friends sit side by side
Not a single word passes between the pair
Except for their joy
of being in each other's presence.
Oblivious to the time that drips slowly by
In droning dregs*

*I have known the silence of the storm
The calm before the big finale
The muted sound of snow softly landing on the ground
And the silence of pensiveness
A mind lost in a sea of memories
Thoughts of times of pain, of happiness, of love
When someone asks you, "What's wrong?"
You don't answer-
You're in a world of your own
And no one can pull you out...
Except yourself*

*What is the use of language in a world that relies
On our emotions alone?
Where body language,
Facial expressions
Are the answers to all questions.*

*Alise Peckjian
Lower Moreland High School
Grade 9
Mrs. Mont*

If You Want to Grow Up to be a Gorilla

When I was very young, maybe two, I dreamed of growing up to be a dinosaur. I was going to be the sleek and stealthy two-legged type, probably the kind with a really long set of claws to rip open my prey. My brother, a man of the world (he had been to two birthday parties), who was twice my age (he is two years and two weeks older than I), who attended school (three mornings a week at the local nursery co-op) set me straight. It was not possible for me to grow up to be a dinosaur of any type: dinosaurs are extinct.

Realizing the truth of this logic, I fixed my dreams upon becoming a tiger. Such regal beauty concealing tremendous power seemed the ideal. Again my brother set me straight: tigers have four legs and live in the jungle. I am not big on heat and obviously a two-legged animal cannot become a four-legged one.

Then my future became clear to me; I would be a gorilla. I ran it past my brother, who was a veritable font of wisdom at age four and three quarters. We discussed it and agreed. I would grow up to be a gorilla, and he would become a forest ranger to protect me from poachers. For several weeks life at our home was a gorilla life. We took several trips to the library to look at the reference books which were filled with brilliant color images of my future. I especially liked the one picture in a massive National Geographic book: a baby gorilla was riding on the back of an adult. That baby, he had a leaf pinched in his lips and a shine in his eyes, was going to be me. My mother read the words, and we admired the pictures. I ate bananas and slept under my bed. We had decided that this was as close to a leaf nest as our suburban home would allow. Then the bad news came. An even more worldly third grader had heard the plan and let us know. All gorillas in the United States live in zoos! If I were to become a gorilla, I would become a prisoner in the zoo.

Aware of this set-back, we got our mother to take us back to the library where we found the weighty full-sized atlas. We found the magical pages filled with bright colors and other secret map stuff, and we located where gorillas live wild. Africa, the only place

on Earth with wild gorillas, looked very far away from Lincoln Park, Illinois. Still, I felt like a gorilla. I was as big as kids several years older than myself. Further proof was found when we learned about the gorillas' diet. My mom explained that gorillas prefer fruits and vegetables and do not eat meat. "Just like me," I thought. The only meat I would eat was an occasional turkey dog. Most of all I knew I was a gorilla because I had watched them in the zoo. I would watch those wonderful silverbacks and feel I knew what they were thinking. Africa was clearly the only choice for me.

Mac, the wise brother, decided that he would become a Zulu warrior. To help me in my goal, he took on a large responsibility. Our family became an "Impi," the Zulu term for a fighting unit. In the same book in which we learned about the Impi, we learned that Zulus could run for days on end and never rest. Mac took this feat upon himself. Almost daily, our mother took the family (insert any totally non-Zulu sounding, North-European surname you like at this point because there is no way I am admitting to any of this foolishness by allowing our real family name to be used). For this true story I will use "Smith," no I prefer something a bit grander, "Anthony") to the park. The Anthony Impi, was a small one by Zulu standards, just my mom and three small boys. We went to the park for training purposes. I would climb and work on being a good gorilla and Mac would run the track. Round and round he went, not at great speed but with long steady strides. He did not play on the slides or swings. He just ran the hour away. When it was time to go home, we walked, and Mac ran. He would charge ahead, receding in front of us to the end of the sidewalk and then turn around. As he came back towards us, he would grow large again and then shoot past back along the sidewalk we had just walked. Never stopping, he looped around us, over and over again, running each block several times. The rest of the Impi just casually walked along.

My mother never told Mac he could not become a Zulu; nor did she mention that cross-species-transmutations were not a scientific reality thereby making my becoming a gorilla unrealistic. She let me eat all the bananas I cared to. She let Mac run his Zulu

heart out. For a project one day we made ourselves cow skin shields in the finest Zulu tradition. I know that we started with brown paper bags and duct tape, but I also know that by the end they were genuine Zulu fighting shields.

Now Mac is eighteen and still running the long course but as a cellist. He loves the solo hours building his music to be more than it is today. He gave up all the easiest parts of being a smart, handsome teenager and stayed home to struggle. He will apply to conservatory this week. Schools that take no students at all on some years—those, of course, are his goal. The short course, just walking the sidewalk with the rest, will not do. Once he gets in, well again that is the easy part, then he will have to get a job as a classical musician in a society that is not actually too big on classical music. Our Impi still works together. While Mac spends his day with his cello, I do his yard work and our younger brother gave up his room so Mac would have a private place to practice. The sounds of his pounding feet and steady breathing from the running years are now replaced with graceful hours of Johann Sebastian Bach's suites for Unaccompanied Cello.

For my part, not being a gorilla is still a disappointment. They are such marvelous beings. But in my quest to follow a goal, I learned that I have a brother to whom my dreams matter. If I were going to move to Africa to take up my free life as a gorilla, well then he would move also. He dreamed of being a Zulu ranger to keep me safe. I am certain that he will get into a fine conservatory and leave the Impi, come Fall. When I was small, I saw a faraway care that dwelled in the eyes of one of the zoo gorillas. To me, it seems entirely possible that he was simply worried about his brother who had stayed behind in Africa with no one there to watch out for him.

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People who have just met my mother for the first time always respond in one of two ways. They either say that she is a nice lady or they ask "Is your mom drunk?" I wish that I could just reply yes to that inquiry; that that was the simple truth behind her avid gregariousness. It would certainly be easier than apologetically trying to explain the highly expressive, compassionate yet clueless mess that is Nicoletta Ann DeMarco.

She is better known to everyone as Colette Smale; a reflection of her lack of enthusiasm for her Italian heritage. This failure to embrace her culture probably sprouts from her childhood experiences in an undeniably Italian family. My mother and her three sisters were raised by my grandmother in an apartment on the dead-end street of 7th Place in Carroll Gardens Brooklyn. While my grandmother may have been a highly dedicated mother, working waitress jobs to support her daughters, my mom and her sisters still knew a difficult life; lacking the money to even own more than one pair of pants. This financial struggle, however, was not nearly as devastating to the DeMarco girls as its cause. One day when my mother was ten years old, my grandmother had to tell her and her sisters that their father was leaving them.

The very next day, my mom came home from school to the news that her father had already left. He did not bother to waste time saying goodbye to his children. I can picture her running into his closet, confused and shocked by its foreign emptiness. I see her clutching the one sweater he left behind, the one that had been her favorite, and her hugging it close and smelling him as she wept into it. I hear her shout in her head, why this sweater? Did he leave it just to make it hurt more? As if the pain of watching her father, whose handsome face and unusual light brown eyes, and whose strong arms and police uniform she had taken such pride in; the only man in her life whom she admired and loved like all little girls do, as if watching him slam the door in her face because he doesn't love her enough to say goodbye wasn't enough pain for one ten year old girl's heart.

As the years passed, my mom and her sisters would see their father again. A trip to Florida where he had moved with his new wife would be the next and last time. What was supposed to be a week-long reunion with their father ended after two days with a phone call asking to come home; their father's new wife was cruel to them. My mother has described this woman to me as an ugly obnoxious Italian, similar to the relatives on my mother's paternal side. That is the source of her anti-Italian sentiments, I believe.

What's funny today is that despite my mom's annoyance with her background, there are few people I can think of more Italian in appearance and behavior than her. The jet black curls of her youth, characteristic of her Sicilian ancestry, still force their way through years of lightening-attempts and battles with hairdryers. And as far as having a conversation with my mom goes, I'm quite confident that a deaf person would be able to understand her; she talks as much with her hands as she does with her motor-mouth. But still, to be deaf would mean missing out on her completely obvious Brooklyn accent, which twenty years of Pennsylvania suburbs have done nothing to hinder. Where personality is concerned, all the stereotypes are true. My mother is loud, opinionated, and very overwhelming. But my mother is also one of the most warm-hearted and simplest people you will ever meet. I remember for one of my birthdays she bought some blank wooden furniture and painted it for me. She was so excited to finally give me it. She kept asking, "Do you like it Erica?!" with a grin so sincere and vibrant. This little accomplishment, the poorly stenciled moon and star embellishment-she was so proud. Not even I, her daughter with whom her relationship has been tumultuous, could deny my mother the simple joy of hearing I loved it.

Despite all of the selfless things my mother has done for me, our relationship still remains barely existent. It is true of most teenagers, I know, to not like their parents, and the parents typically have no patience for their unruly youth. However in this relationship, I have no patience for my mother. I am

constantly questioning her intelligence level; and while that may sound like a conceited thing to say, rather I admit it grudgingly because it is one of the most embarrassing aspects of my life. For a grown woman to not understand that the plural of the word "hoof" is "hooves," and to give out advice like "Cantaloupe means that they come from a loving family," and to be so completely incapable of comprehending that the pointer on the laptop screen moves with the mouse is unexplainable to me.

But the more I am exposed to other families- people who worship material things, mothers who jump at any chance to gossip, the more I realize that my mother really is a beautiful person. When held up against others, her flaws no longer seem like such utter humiliation. I can appreciate how simple she is. And I can appreciate how she is grateful for every single thing in her life. Even though we may struggle to find common ground, and even though I will continue to be embarrassed by aspects of her personality, I hope that I will also become humble enough to embrace these aspects which make her such a sincere human being. One thing however, will always remain the same: whenever I take the time to realize that the disheartening situations formerly depicted are actually facets of the trying life my mother lived, I am overcome with both awe and pride. I can only hope that I too, am made with this same unwavering strength that established such a remarkable and admirable soul in my mother.

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